

**Public Awareness  
Marketing Plan  
for  
Underground Utility Damage Prevention**

**Prepared for  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Office of Pipeline Safety**

November 20, 1997

## Preface

The purpose of this marketing plan is to improve implementation, control and continuity of advertising/public relations programs and to ensure the most effective and efficient use of ad dollars.

The Office of Pipeline Safety mission is:

“To protect the people and the environment of the United States through a comprehensive pipeline safety program that includes effective risk management, thorough pipeline compliance, high quality training, and a strong, balanced Federal/State partnership.”

*(A primary focus of this mission statement is third party damage, also known as outside force or excavation damage.)*

## **Situation Analysis**

### **Centers/Services**

#### *The History*

Out-of-sight and out-of-mind should never be the case when it comes to underground utilities and excavators. All too often it is. Excavation damage affects all underground utilities: natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines, telecommunications, water and sewer lines and electric utilities.

A 1992 Office of Pipeline Safety report stated third party damage accounted for 33% of all pipeline accidents; 40% of all reported fatalities; 38% of all reported injuries; and, 51% of all property damage. A few examples are as follows:

- *Valley Stream, NY 5/11/95* - Some 20,000 people were affected when a subcontractor, using a jackhammer, hit a 16-inch water supply line. Some people lost water service while others were flooded. There was no report that the line was marked.
- *Fall City, WA 2/9/96* – A county crew working to repair flood damage hit a fiber optic cable. Among the services affected were 911, which was out for several hours. During that time, a man suffered a heart attack and died as a passerby tried unsuccessfully to summon emergency help.

- *Nashville, TN* – A road construction crew hit a gas line causing the evacuation of 1,100 elementary school pupils as well as 30 nearby homes. The initial force of the escaping gas knocked out windows in one of the nearby homes.
- *Thayer, MO 1/18/96* – About 31,000 pounds of solids were forced out of a sewage treatment plant and into a river after a bulldozer operator apparently broke a line carrying raw sewage into the plant. The bulldozer operator was trying to build a levy to keep water off land he was leasing. Officials said he had no permit for that work. He denied damaging the line.
- *Joliet, IL 11/18/95* – Some 1,000 customers were without power when a building contractor hit a power cable. The outage lasted about 90 minutes.

Why do these accidents happen? The Federal Communications Commissions' (FCC) records of 'reportable outages' (lasting more than 30 minutes and affecting over 30,000 customers) relay that:

- 51% were due to excavator failure to notify the utility operator or inadequate notification;
- 20% were the result of excavator digging error;
- 18% were due to inaccurate locates;
- 9% were due to failure to locate; and,
- 2% due to other causes.

In addition, a recent Gas Research Institute (GRI) study indicates:

- In 56% of cases on local distribution company lines involving third party damage, the excavator had used the one call system.

**National research** conducted by Edge Research, Inc. in May of this year, provides findings which gives additional insight into product usage. The sample characteristics consisted of smaller contractor companies who excavate on a daily basis; a government sample of state, county and municipal workers who excavate on a weekly basis and facility operators from the larger utilities.

The results are highlighted for *professional excavators* as follows:

- Most contractors and government workers are familiar with one call and most use the system reporting that they contact one call regularly before excavating.
- Most facility operators participate in a one call program and report they regularly provide excavators with facility location information before excavations.
- While the vast majority of industry respondents report that one call centers are very effective, two-thirds say they have been in accidents even after contacting and receiving information from a one call center.

- Large majorities of all industry respondents report their organization has been involved in accidents that caused damages to underground facilities.
- For excavators who have had problems with one call, speed and accuracy are the most commonly cited reasons why the system is not effective.
- When prompted, top criticisms revolve around availability and speed.
- Contractors and government workers cite inaccurate facility markings as an important factor in their most recent accidents. (Still, about one-third say, the facility operator provides accurate markings, but their organization failed to avoid damage anyway.)
- Training materials, safety videos and work permits are perceived to be the most effective.
- The overwhelming majority of contractors, government workers and facility operators are very concerned about underground facility damage and worry about their potential to cause or be victims of damage.

The results are highlighted for the *general public* as follows:

- The general public has a lower level of awareness for underground facilities and damage prevention, although a majority is aware of one call systems.
- While the majority of the general public is aware of one call, only one-third of those who have excavated report using it.
- Utility bill inserts, articles and TV PSAs are how most people have heard about one call.
- While potential for personal injury is the top reason to use one call, damaging the infrastructure and hurting the environment are effective messages as well.

These studies indicate that the top two reasons why accidents happen are excavator-related. While excavators may utilize “call before you dig,” they may not always use safe digging practices. In the meantime, the general public is in the introductory phase of “call before you dig.”

(Please refer to the appendix for SIC code listings to be utilized for pre and post campaign surveys.)

**Messages** for the campaign, confirmed by this data, should be as follows:

- ✓ Calling the local one call center before digging (reiterating this as a reminder for professional excavator and educating the general public);
- ✓ Waiting the required time for the site to be marked before digging;
- ✓ Respecting the marks of each facility operator indicating the location of its underground lines;
- ✓ Digging with care, i.e. hand digging when appropriate; and,
- ✓ Notifying the facility operator if a line is hit, even if there is no apparent damage.

### *The Call to Action*

*In early 90's, two riveting pipeline incidents launched the Federal government into taking damage prevention action. On March 28, 1993, in Reston, Virginia, a hazardous liquid pipeline carrying gasoline under a hospital parking lot ruptured from prior damage by mechanized equipment (probably a backhoe.) Approximately 407,700 gallons spilled into drains running into a nearby creek and endangering the water of 818,584 people. While 355,000 gallons were recovered, the cost of the damages equaled \$10.3 million for clean up costs, \$11.5 million for pollution prevention and \$2.1 million for private settlements and penalties. In 1994, a massive gas explosion leveled an apartment complex and left 1,200 people homeless in Edison, New Jersey. Investigators found a gas pipe had been gouged by excavation equipment to the point that it later corroded and ruptured. Miraculously, the only fatality resulting from the 1994 accident was a heart attack suffered by a nearby resident.*



In March 1994, after these pipeline incidences in Edison, NJ and Reston, VA, the Secretary of Transportation expressed his commitment at the National Pipeline Safety Summit when he stated the cornerstone of damage prevention is the one call system and promoting one call use as well as educating the general public and professional excavators is essential.

In September 1996, the Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) was given the opportunity to develop a national damage prevention campaign. Other participants include: representatives of the hazardous liquid and natural gas pipeline industries; One Call Systems International (OCSI), the umbrella group of one call centers; the National Association of State Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR); the National Association of Regulatory Commissioners (NARUC); and the insurance and telecommunications industries.

In response, the OPS adapted a partnership approach by utilizing the Damage Prevention Quality Action Team (DAMQAT), composed of representatives in affected areas, to provide focus.

DAMQAT recommended that a pilot campaign be developed and implemented in the three states of Georgia, Tennessee and Virginia. The campaign's mission is to lay the groundwork for the national effort.

### Benefits of the One Call Centers

**The *position*** of the one call center has always been to act as a liaison between excavators and facility operators; to receive calls from excavators wanting utility lines flagged or marked on their work site; and, to then notify the member utilities when they need to locate and mark their lines.

**Specific benefits** are 1) saving the excavator time and money - through one call notification to all member utilities and the liability protection for damaged lines; 2) more peace of mind for the construction worker; and, 3) uninterrupted service for businesses, homes and public facilities – especially critical for hospitals, 911 operators, fire /rescue, air traffic control and water mains.

**Industry standards**, as provided by the National Utility Locating Contractors Association, are cited as follows:

- “Call before you dig” is a national phrase; however, keep in mind, it may not be a law or enforceable in each state.
- Marking codes and line depth vary per state (the variance in the depth is based on geographical climate and soil type plus grading may sometimes have an affect) and are noted as follows:

Facility	Color Mark	Approx. Depth Buried
Telephone/Cable TV	Orange	6 in. – 4 ft.
Electric	Red	2-1/2 ft. – 4 ft.
Gas/Oil	Yellow	2-1/2 ft. – 4 ft.
Water	Blue	3 ft. – 6 ft.
Sewer	Green	3 ft. – 6 ft.
Proposed Excavation	White	N/A
Surveying	Pink	N/A

- Digging allowances/buffer zones for mechanized equipment range from 18” to 24” from the mark depending on the state. Anything within that space requires “hand digging” to expose the line.
- Notification time before a dig varies per state from 48 hours to 72 hours.

Since all of the states do not uphold the same excavating practices for damage prevention, it is important to take into consideration the national standards and variances when developing creative. This way the campaign can be easily implemented in all states when taken to the national level.

## **Market Environment**

### *Construction Growth Ends*

According to Aberdeen's Outlook of the Construction Marketing Network, construction spending is expected to record no growth in the second half of 1997 (after a 6% growth rate through June.) This downward trend will continue into 1998, with spending expected to drop 0.6%.

However, highway, sewer, water and telecommunications spending will continue growing but at a slowing pace well into 1998. By the end of the year, single-family homes will join education and public and utility facilities as the only growing sectors.

So while growth obviously will be slow, damage prevention will still maintain an active role in the upcoming year while keeping up with the industries projected to have growth.

### *Deregulation in the Utility Industry*

Deregulation seems to be what is "hot" for the utilities industry.

**Electric deregulation** is the latest phase of utility deregulation. The Electric Consumers' Power to Choose Act of 1997 (H.R. 655), introduced on February 10, 1997, gives all American electricity consumers the right to choose among competitive providers of electricity in order to secure lower electricity rates, higher quality services and a more robust United States economy. There is not a single mandate on states in this bill, so they have full discretion to decide whether to implement retail choice for their ratepayers by December 15, 2000.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has also okayed the "gas/electric convergence" mergers. For example, Duke Power, one of the nation's largest electric utilities and PanEnergy, one of the largest U.S. transporters and marketers of natural gas, just merged.

As the natural gas and electric power industries continue their rapid pace of deregulation and move toward a single energy sector, the ability to offer multiple forms of energy – such as gas, electricity, fuel oil, coal and other products – will be essential. Both geographical and industry boundaries will no longer apply. Third party suppliers for natural gas may also be a factor for natural gas.

Equally as important as providing the service will be providing support for the service. Thus, when a line is damaged, the task of finding who is responsible for the repair will be much more complex than it has in the past.

**Telecommunications deregulation** is another important change to contend with as its fiber-optic “roads” build the “superhighway network.” Now service for the telephone, cable TV, high-speed Internet access and security- and energy – management systems, all flowing through a single cable can be installed.

Deregulation, combined with the fact that many electric companies have both substantial telecommunications facilities and lines into customers’ homes, is the driving factor behind the utilities’ move into the telecommunications market.

With the fiber-optic cables, not only will hitting one line affect multiple services, it will also be very expensive to repair. The timeliness of this campaign is key and the increasing consequences of damaging a utility line must be emphasized to all excavators.

### *It's the Law.*

Enactment of federal one call legislation has not yet resulted in the passage of a bill. The proposed legislation would recommend that all excavators call the local one call system before they dig and that all underground facility operators belong to the local one call system. Currently, only pipeline operators are required to join and to use one call systems where available.

The ultimate goal is for every state to have a one call system that lets anyone, both private citizens and excavators, call a one toll-free number to identify the location of underground utilities.

On the state level, OPS offers technical support to state legislature in drafting one call legislation or amending their existing law. Many states have one call laws in place, but variations especially in the area of enforcement weaken their effectiveness. Currently 48 states and the District of Columbia have one call legislation.

In the absence of federal legislation, the goal is to achieve a high degree of consistency among existing laws including: state-wide notification systems; mandatory participation by all underground facility operators; requirement that all excavators call before they dig; 24-hour coverage with provision for emergency excavation; and, effective, easily administered sanctions and the implementation of a nationwide toll-free one call telephone number.

## **Geography**

For the purpose of conducting the test pilot, the one call campaign is to be implemented in the three (3) states of Georgia, Tennessee and Virginia before

going national. (When taken nationally, the focus should be on 49 states since Hawaii does not yet have a one call center.)

These markets were chosen, among other reasons, for their building growth and longevity of digging season. Yet, these markets are comparable on a national basis with regard to usage. For an effective test, marketing should be geographically dispersed on a statewide basis to account for variations in lifestyle, climatic conditions, etc. Additionally, markets should be reasonably isolated to minimize spill-out and spill-in media weight from other markets.

Statewide efforts should be utilized to benefit the entire state. However, when utilizing broadcast media, metropolitan areas (not overlapping state boundaries) should be targeted as follows:

- Georgia's metropolitan areas

Metro	Building Permits	Population	Households
Albany	654	118,000	41,600
Athens	729	138,000	51,900
Atlanta	33,266	3,582,000	1,330,200
Macon	1,409	315,000	116,400
Savannah	1,009	285,000	104,800



- Tennessee's metropolitan areas:

Metro	Building Permits	Population	Households
Jackson	475	99,000	37,500
Knoxville	3,412	652,000	260,100
Nashville	8,131	1,128,000	432,500

- Virginia's metropolitan areas:

<b>Metro</b>	<b>Building Permits</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Households</b>
Charlottesville	826	145,000	54,000
Danville	265	110,000	43,800
Lynchburg	795	206,000	778,900
Roanoke	794	230,000	93,100
Richmond/Petersburg	5,400	937,000	363,000

## Seasonality

Seasonality should be taken into consideration when scheduling efforts and should reflect when the majority of construction happens and most excavating occurs. According to the Construction Marketing Network's statistics and Aberdeen's Outlook:

- The weakest times are January and February; and,
- The strongest times are August, September and October.

The recommendation is that the pilot runs for six (6) months – May 1998 through October 1998. Since impacting awareness takes time, six (6) months is preferred over five (5) to get the additional month of influence.

## Target Audience

The **primary target** audience consists of professional excavators (excavating contractors), government employees (highway and public works departments on a state, county or municipal level) and underground facility operators (excavators installing their own lines.)

Marketing should take a two-tiered approach to reach both 1) the supervisor of excavating crew/construction workers and 2) the excavator/construction workers themselves.

This way the supervisor provides a point-of-entry for reaching the people actually doing the digging and for effectively communicating the "safe digging practices" message.

Based on information supplied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the primary target audience can be demographically defined as men 25-44, predominately white, but with a considerable Hispanic influence. (Please refer to the appendix for demographic breakouts.)

The **secondary target** audience consists of the general public. Homeowners digging in their yard with mechanized equipment or even a simple shovel fall into this group.

For planning purposes, emphasis should be 80% professional excavator/20% general public.

## Positioning Statement

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Pipeline Safety, in partnership with underground facility operators, state agencies, professional excavators and one call centers, is committed to underground utility damage prevention through the education and promotion of safe digging practices.

*For the professional excavator and general public striving to keep America safe and connected, digging responsibly is the only way to dig.*

(Again, safe digging practices include:

- ✓ Calling the local one call center before digging (reiterating as a reminder for professional excavator and educating the general public);
- ✓ Waiting the required time for the site to be marked before digging;
- ✓ Respecting the marks of each facility operator indicating the location of its underground lines;
- ✓ Digging with care, i.e. hand digging when appropriate; and,
- ✓ Notifying the facility operator if a line is hit, even if there is no apparent damage.)

## Objectives and Strategies

### Objectives

- Create national recognition of the need for safe digging practices.
- Build local and statewide awareness for one call centers.
- Increase the number of first time calls to one call centers.

### Strategies

- Develop corporate positioning which translates into a national plan.
- Utilize direct marketing (direct mailing of safety videos and training materials and distribution of safe digging practices at governmental and retail offices,) paid media (trade publications/association newsletters) and public relations (long-format PSAs, special events and press releases/radio news wraps) to efficiently and effectively reach the *professional excavator*.
- Focus center-driven public service announcements (PSAs – TV and radio) and member-driven co-operative advertising (bill stuffers, ad cut-ins, social marketing tag lines) on the *general public* to contribute to the overall safety message.

## **Corporate Positioning**

### **Brand Imaging**

Since excavation happens episodically, establishing a vivid brand image is particularly important for damage prevention.

A clear, concise statement made consistently over time will influence decisions and actions long after a campaign is concluded. It will also remain a positive influence during a period of stress (when an accident happens and/or morale is down.)

Therefore, it is recommended that a national logo with a tag line reflecting its positioning statement be developed. Utilizing this logo and tag on every piece of promotion will provide the frequency needed to build brand recall. This logo needs to be adaptable with each individual state's one call logo and telephone number.

Especially since the message serves as a public service announcement revolving around safety, the logo and its tag needs to be strong enough to stick. Images such as the 70's Indian with a tear, after viewing all the pollution; eggs

frying like brains on drugs; and, of course, Smokey the Bear- the American icon- come to mind with regard to “sticking” power.

## **Emotional Bonding**

In addition to being rational, excavating decisions are often affected by emotional considerations. For example when time is of the essence, an excavator may not want to wait for lines to be marked or take the time to hand dig to expose a line. Thus, he or she makes an emotional decision.

The pilot campaign must evoke emotions and thus bond with the excavator by addressing *anxiety* and *peace of mind*. This bonding will influence emotional decisions made time and time again.

Emotional bonding for the one call centers must be based on points that are believable to the excavators. In other words, it must complement the current perception of the system and strive to understand the excavator. Claiming that lines will be located quickly and correctly would discredit the ad before the excavator has time to read it. Also, people are so used to being preached to or hit over the head (past PSAs) that it might be more effective to take an austere but quieter approach to achieve more impact. Therefore, the campaign should attempt to get professional excavators to think about the effect that they make with tools/equipment and make that feeling of responsibility desirable.

Secondary research on construction/excavator advertising tactics revealed the following:

- If using a humorous approach with visuals, use cartoon-type characters versus the “realness” of photos. This gives the viewers a clue that the image is meant to be a humorous exaggeration and avoids ticking people off.
- Focus groups, conducted by Construction Marketing Today, confirmed contractors prefer buzzwords and slogans; big and bold type; bright colors and informative visuals. In addition, useful information (whether through words or pictures) is a must.
- Dull ads are considered to be those which show equipment out in the field.
- Samsung Construction Equipment America Corp. research showed testimonials work well with contractors.

For the general public, bonding should simply tie back to the positioning statement. The creative approach should be sensitive and not too graphic out of respect for accidents that have already happened.



## **Action Programs**

Action programs provide short-term details for reaching the target. These details determine what specific actions need to be taken and, when applicable, by whom.

This following should serve as a “game plan” based on the previous pages’ input and direction. The recommendations and guidelines are open to change or enhancement.

## **Direct Marketing**

Direct marketing should strive to reach the professional excavator. It provides a very targeted approach as well as a good format for relaying detailed training or educational messages. Direct marketing also brings “place” directly to where the target audience interacts.

Direct marketing tactics are as follows:

### *Direct Mail*

- Implement unique and outstanding creative:
  - ✓ Recipient will be more likely to utilize the materials, versus letting them sit on a desk, if they are clever. *(For example, a teaser approach to some of*

*the mailings could raise awareness, excitement and anticipation leading up to the video mailing while relaying a different safety message in bite-size pieces with each drop.)*

- ✓ Relating to the excavator needs could provide effective opportunities.

*(For example, a study conducted in Western Australia revealed that injuries such as sprains or strains in the construction industry are a major problem. Tying into health related giveaways could be a revelation when it comes to materials that get remembered. )*

- Use a two-tier approach:
  - ✓ Reach the excavating supervisor who is responsible for the one call and communicate the importance of “call before you dig.”
  - ✓ Utilize supervisor as a point of entry for reaching the construction crew, who actually do the digging and emphasizing “safe digging practices.”
- Mail “safe digging” package to crew supervisor:
  - ✓ Complete with safety video and training materials (i.e. brochure, bumper stickers)
  - ✓ Suggest using at rainy day safety meetings or pre-construction meetings.
- Utilize a direct marketing company with construction equipment experience when renting a mailing list. Cahners Direct Marketing Services, which is a high profile source, has a strong background in building and construction and can provide a targeted list of excavators from a broad universe of SIC codes.

Their 10,556 count breaks out per each of the three (3) states as follows:

List	GA	TN	VA
Construction Equipment - includes highway and heavy construction, general building construction, federal government, state government, county government, local government, mining companies and utilities.	539	449	694
Professional Builder - includes construction equipment and tracks segment of custom and single family homebuilders.	1,951	1,363	2,061
Building Design and Construction - includes site work and equipment segment of commercial, industrial and institutional builders.	1,294	889	1,316
Total Count per State	3,784	2,701	4,071

(Please refer to appendix for more details from Cahners' "quick count" report.)

### Government Licensing and Permitting Offices

- Contractors must apply for both building permits and a business license on a walk-in basis through a permitting office and business licensing office at either a city hall or county courthouse.
- Contractors must apply for a state license through the mail with the State Contractor Licensing Board.
- Utilize these offices as vehicles to reach contractors on a direct basis.
  - ✓ Take-one cards could provide both “call before you dig message” and safety information.
  - ✓ Decal stickers could be placed on actual permits with “call before you dig” message.
  - ✓ Mailings (state licenses) back to contractors could contain either the take-one card or decal sticker depending on space available.

### Bond Insurance Companies and Equipment Rental Stores

- Contractors must be bonded as a promise to perform an action. It is critical to their livelihood.
- Smaller contractors performing excavation jobs sometimes for homeowners may patronize equipment rental stores.

- Utilize these retail locations as vehicles to reach contractors on a direct basis with the same take-one cards or decals.

## **Paid Media**

A paid media schedule will ensure that the primary target has been exposed to the message and can be easily implemented into other states when ready.

Paid media suggestions are as follows:

### *Trade Publications and Association Newsletters*

The overall strategies for trade publications and association newsletters are recommended as follows:

- Utilize targeted trade publications and association newsletters directed specifically towards the defined specialty groups.
  - ✓ Consider trade publications which target persons involved Building, Engineering & Construction and Government & Public Works.

- ✓ Utilize association newsletters, where available, which represent major associations.

(Please refer to appendix for list of associations that should be contacted.)

- Exclusively focus advertising in the defined geographic areas to eliminate waste circulation and ensure cost efficiencies.
  - ✓ In general, pursue media opportunities which offer statewide or major metro coverage.
  - ✓ Evaluate local/statewide editions of *national* publications; publications not offering these options should be eliminated from the evaluation.
  - ✓ Research “independent” contractor publications/newsletters which are produced locally - generally, these publications are not affiliated with a national publication.
  - ✓ Contact local or statewide associations which offer advertising supported newsletters.
- Thoroughly evaluate each publication based on its delivery of the target audience.
  - ✓ At minimum, compare circulations for each publication.

- ✓ Where possible, analyze each publication's *coverage* of the specialty group that it targets (compare the publication's circulation to the total universe of contractors in the targeted geographic area).
  - ✓ Pay close attention to duplication; those publications with heavy audience duplication should be analyzed and appropriately eliminated where necessary.
- Analyze publications to ensure balanced coverage of the target audience.
    - ✓ Each individual element the target audience should receive advertising support where possible.
    - ✓ Geographic coverage should also be balanced, with, at minimum, all major metro areas receiving advertising support.
- Evaluate and recommend publications in order to maximize cost efficiencies.
    - ✓ Thorough comparison of out-of-pocket cost.
    - ✓ Analyze cost per thousand (cost compared to the target circulation reached.)
- Schedule media support to ensure optimum frequency against the target audience.

- ✓ Monthly publications should be utilized four (4) to six (6) times over the six-month test period.
- ✓ Schedule quarterly publications one (1) to two (2) times over the course of the campaign, depending on issue dates and availability.
- Full marketing packages should be negotiated with each publication.
  - ✓ Look for value-added opportunities and/or bonus inserts such as web site listings or extra direct mail opportunities.
  - ✓ Publications today act as marketing partners offering complete packages to meet the client's marketing goals.

## **Public Relations**

There could not be a better match than public relations and a public service campaign. Public relations creates awareness and augmentation for advertising. Its expertise can also help increase the frequency of public service announcements. Finally, public relations helps to secure editorial opportunities and newsroom coverage.

Public relations tactics are as follows:



### Long-format PSAs

- Broadcast PSA time often is eaten up by specialty programming.
- The long format PSA could offset this by acting as a news and informational show.
- A longer format lends itself toward more complicated issues that are not easily put into 30-second spot.

### Special Events

- Inviting contractors to special events is a great way to build awareness and attract new callers.
- From a beef-n-beer, to a golf outing to a breakfast seminar, special events for contractors can go a long way in building relationships that work.
- In the case of educational events, survey attendees afterward to see what was found to be useful and what could be improved.
- Proclaim a month in the high peak season as “call before you dig” month, preferably May.

### Press Releases

- Cover newspaper, radio and TV.
- Press releases should maintain a high level of frequency.
- Topics may include anything from the special events mentioned above to launch of campaign itself.

### Radio News Wrap/ Sound Bites

- Information is recorded and available for stations to utilize quickly and easily at their discretion and convenience.

## **Center Driven PSAs**

Public service announcements (PSAs) can provide mass reach of the general public as well as enhance coverage of the specialty groups targeted with paid advertising. Although not guaranteed, aggressive PSA efforts can result in considerable increases in awareness levels.

Also, public service announcements evoke feelings, passions, and deep shivers down the spine. They tend to be remembered because when they work, they make people think. They are usually the product of powerful, uninhibited creative. Unique yet strategic creative should be encouraged since it is often what intrigues media vendors to run PSA spots.

Media vendors, in general, will run PSAs for a justifiable cause. Ruth Wooden, president of the Ad Council, stated “The source of the message is just as important as the message. The definition of a PSA is that it can’t have a commercial.”

*One call centers and their board members’ leadership in this process is what will make the PSA program successful.*

**Soliciting strategies** should be noted when pursuing PSAs:

- Prior to creative production, media vendors should be asked their preferred format.
- Communicate to media vendors that only a straight PSA schedule is being pursued. (Vendors are more likely to run a straight schedule versus a mix of paid and unpaid; in which case, they would more likely hold out for the money.)
- Verbal and/or face-to-face contact is important to securing PSAs.
- Utilize local contacts as much as possible - “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know.”
  - ✓ Letters alone generally do not work; recommend face-to-face or telephone contact.
  - ✓ The utilization of personal contacts will significantly increase the likelihood of receiving PSA weight.
  - ✓ The Public Service contact should understand the importance of the program and how it could influence them personally.

- For broadcast, PSAs will be put into a general rotation over a 24-hour period; however, dayparts may be prescribed from 5:00 AM to midnight but are not guaranteed.
- Affidavits should be requested to confirm what actually did run.

**Television and radio PSAs** are recommended exclusively for the following reasons:

- Broadcast media has the ability to generate mass reach in a short amount of time.
- Limited dollars are available for the production of PSAs.
- Should additional production dollars become available, opportunities in local newspapers and magazines should be considered.

#### Broadcast Television

- In general, provides the most reach of the general public.

- Typically is the most difficult to secure due to existing commitments to other Public Service efforts and sold out inventory.
  - ✓ Stations are required by law to run a specified amount of public service programming or advertising on a monthly basis.
  - ✓ Unfortunately for advertisers, much of the public service “time” is utilized by specialty programming versus PSAs, leaving the time allocated to PSAs limited.
  
- On April 14, 1997, the Federal Communications Commission’s chairman, Reed Hundt and Ad Council chairman, Alex Kroll, blasted networks for cutting the amount of public service announcements they air. Hundt is likely to direct networks and stations to air more PSAs to satisfy the public service requirement and prime time will probably be affected.
  
- Begin correspondence for PSAs far in advance of air time; the earlier, the better.

### Local Cable Television

- Present advantage for stations as one call members. Cable TV has the most to gain from utility damage protection.

- Generally accept and run PSAs willingly.
- Solicit PSAs from representatives who handle advertising for numerous cable systems.
  - ✓ CAMA (Cable Advertising of Metro Atlanta) and other “like” companies represent a significant number of cable systems on a local level.
  - ✓ CNI (Cable Networks, Inc.) and NCA (National Cable Advertisers) are national rep firms who handle multiple systems in multiple markets and may be able to make commitments across numerous markets.
- Utilize local contacts in areas where the representatives are unable to cover.

### Radio

- Will usually run PSAs, assuming inventory is available.
- Many stations run standard :30 and :60 PSAs.
- Stations may offer to will run :10 ID's to further enhance the message; the client generally provides copy and the station will produce.
- Local contacts at smaller market stations should be strongly utilized.

- As with other media, stations will generally rotate spots in where inventory is available.
- Solicit top stations in each market.
  - ✓ Consider a country format, where available, as contractors are more likely than average to listen to this particular format.
- Solicit statewide radio networks, such as the Georgia News Network, where available.
  - ✓ Offers statewide coverage.
  - ✓ Can provide reach of smaller markets which may not otherwise be considered.



## **Member Driven Co-op Advertising**

Collaborating efforts with each state's one call members (utilities) should be pursued aggressively to provide effective and cost-efficient means of reaching the general public. Each of the three (3) states has approximately 300 members. The co-oping approach would generate synergy for a win-win situation.

*Members should be chosen and marketed to as if they were part of the target audience - stating the benefit and soliciting their participation. Emphasizing their importance to the program and relating it to their own self-good is key.*

- Calls to desired participants should be made and dynamic packages sent after getting verbal commitment.
- Each package should be complete with both creative materials and guidelines to make implementation turnkey.

Member co-operative advertising tactics are as follows:

### *Bill Stuffers*

- Average mechanical dimensions should be gathered.

- Utility specific creative executions should be produced - one for each type of utility, emphasizing what life would be like without that service.
  - ✓ Better identifies with consumer needs;
  - ✓ Emphasizes the importance of the utility company;
  - ✓ Sets up space in layout for utility's logo; and,
  - ✓ Provides extra incentive for member to produce and insert.
- Members would receive a disk with creative ready for internal production.
- Request samples of produced stuffers and number of drops for confirmation.

#### Ad Cut-ins / Control PSA Media Weights

- Request that members, running a media broadcast schedule, allow one call television and radio spots to be cut in over theirs in specific markets for a specified time.
- Unlike PSA schedules where you take what you can get because it is free, cut-ins could provide more control for reaching the desired audience.
- Request affidavits to confirm what actually ran.

### Social Marketing Print Tag Lines

- Social marketing is an increasing popular practice since it emphasizes the results instead of preaching.
- Request that members run a tag line at the bottom of their ads thanking people for calling before they dig and asking them to keep up the good work.
- Again, members would receive camera ready material for internal production.
- Request one tear sheet per member and schedule of run dates for confirmation.

## **Preliminary Budget**

The total budget is \$350,000 with some flexibility and with the intent to utilize PSA scheduling and utility member support to cover media efforts.

## **Association Newsletters**

Interstate National Gas Association  
American Petroleum Institute  
Gas Research Institute  
American Public Gas Association  
American Gas Association

Edison Electric Institute

National Telecommunications Damage Prevention Council  
International Telephone Association

American Water Works Association

Associated General Contractors

National Utility Contractors Association  
Homebuilders Association of America  
Associated Builders and Contractors of America

International Right-a-way Association  
National League of Cities  
American Society of Highway Transportation Officials

American Public Works Association

## References

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## **SIC Code Listing of Contractors (Edge Research, Inc.)**

### CONTRACTORS

0782-04 LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS  
1381-01 CONTRACTORS-OIL FIELD  
1389-02 MUD JACKING CONTRACTORS  
1499-03 MINING CONTRACTORS  
1521-01 PATIO & DECK BUILDERS  
1521-02 GARAGE BUILDERS  
1521-03 GENERAL CONTRACTORS  
1521-05 HOME IMPROVEMENTS  
1521-12 HOME BUILDERS  
1521-28 BASEMENT-REPAIR & RESTORATION  
1521-30 CONSTRUCTION  
1521-38 DECK BUILDERS  
1521-39 REMODELING & REPAIRING BLDG CONTRACTORS  
1522-99 GENERAL CONTRACTORS-RESIDENTIAL BLDGS  
1541-07 CONTRACTORS-INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL  
1542-13 BUILDING CONTRACTORS  
1542-99 GENERAL CONTRACTORS-NONRESIDENTIAL BLDGS  
1611-01 PAVING CONTRACTORS  
1611-02 ROAD BUILDING CONTRACTORS  
1611-03 GRADING CONTRACTORS  
1611-14 CONTRACTORS-PARKING/HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT  
1622-01 CULVERTS  
1622-02 TUNNELLING CONTRACTORS  
1622-03 BRIDGE BUILDERS  
1622-04 ROAD BORING  
1622-98 BRIDGE TUNNEL & ELEVATED HIGHWAY  
1623-01 PIPE LINE CONTRACTORS  
1623-02 PIPING CONTRACTORS  
1623-03 GAS LINE INSTALLATION & REPAIR  
1623-04 WATER MAIN CONTRACTORS  
1623-05 POLE LINE CONTRACTORS  
1623-06 TELEPHONE & TELEVISION CABLE CONTRACTORS  
1623-07 SEWER CONTRACTORS  
1623-08 UTILITY CONTRACTORS  
1623-09 FIBER OPTICS  
1623-10 UNDERGROUND WIRE & CABLE LAYING CONTRS  
1623-11 CONDUIT CONTRACTORS  
1623-12 TELEPHONE-WIRING & REPAIR  
1623-14 CABLE CONDUIT & POLE-CONTRACTORS  
1623-15 CABLE TELEVISION SYSTEMS-CONTRACTORS  
1623-16 WIRING & CABLING-HOME & OFFICE-VOICE  
1623-20 SEWER TAPPERS  
1629-01 PILE DRIVING  
1629-04 DRAINAGE CONTRACTORS  
1629-05 FILL CONTRACTORS  
1629-06 DRAIN LAYING  
1629-07 TENNIS COURT CONSTRUCTION  
1629-08 RAILROAD CONTRACTORS  
1629-09 TRENCHING & UNDERGROUND CONTRACTORS  
1629-11 WATER WORKS CONTRACTORS  
1629-12 DITCHING CONTRACTORS  
1629-14 DREDGING



1629-15 GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION  
1629-24 POWER PLANT CONTRACTORS  
1629-25 MINE SHAFT CONTRACTORS  
1629-26 PONDS & POND SUPPLIES  
1629-30 OIL FIELD CONTRACTORS  
1629-77 CONSTRUCTION  
1629-99 HEAVY CONSTRUCTION NEC  
1711-07 SEPTIC TANKS/SYSTEMS-CLEANING/REPAIRING  
1711-08 SEPTIC TANKS  
1711-28 DRY WELL CONTRACTORS  
1711-42 PLUMBING DRAINS & SEWER CONSULTANTS  
1711-52 SEWER LINE CLEANING  
1711-53 SEWER THAWING  
1781-01 WATER WELL DRILLING & SERVICE  
1781-02 DRILLING & BORING CONTRACTORS  
1781-03 WELL DRILLING  
1781-04 WELL CONTRACTORS-ARTESIAN  
1781-08 WATER SYSTEMS  
1781-10 WATER WELL LOCATING  
1794-01 LANDFILL DEMOLITION  
1794-02 FOUNDATION-DRILLING CONTRACTORS  
1794-03 EXCAVATING CONTRACTORS  
1794-04 BULLDOZING  
1794-05 FOUNDATION-CONTRACTORS  
1794-06 CONTRACTORS-SITE DEVELOPMENT  
1794-07 LAND CLEARING & LEVELING  
1794-08 DIRT CONTRACTORS  
1794-09 SLABJACKING CONTRACTORS  
1794-10 SITE DEVELOPMENT CONTRACTORS  
1795-02 DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS  
1799-28 BORING CONTRACTORS  
1799-37 HOUSE LEVELING  
1799-40 BASEMENT WATERPROOFING  
1799-52 LAKE & POND CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE  
1799-77 CONTRACTORS  
4939-03 UTILITIES-UNDERGROUND-CABLE LOCATING SVC  
7699-02 PLUMBING DRAIN & SEWER CLEANING  
9999-01 FALLOUT SHELTERS-CONTRACTORS & DEALERS  
9999-57 SEWER SYSTEM INSPECTION/REHABILITATION

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

1611-02-P STATE GOVERNMENT HIGHWAY DEPARTMENTS  
  
1611-03-P COUNTY GOVERNMENT HIGHWAY DEPARTMENTS  
1611-04-P CITY GOVERNMENT HIGHWAY DEPARTMENTS

#### FACILITY OPERATORS

1311-01 OIL & GAS PRODUCERS  
1311-03 OIL COMPANIES  
1311-04 OIL & GAS-PRODUCTION  
1311-05 OIL OPERATORS  
1321-98 NATURAL GAS LIQUIDS  
1389-99 OIL & GAS-FIELD SERVICES NEC  
2911 PETROLEUM REFINING

4011-01 RAILROADS  
4212-29 PETROLEUM PRODUCTS-TRANSPORTING  
4612-98 CRUDE PETROLEUM PIPELINES  
4613-98 REFINED PETROLEUM PIPELINES  
4813-02 TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES  
4813-04 TELEPHONE COMPANIES  
4841-01 TELEVISION-CABLE & CATV  
4911-01 ELECTRIC COMPANIES  
4922-01 GAS TRANSMISSION COMPANIES  
4922-98 NATURAL GAS TRANSMISSION  
4923-98 NATURAL GAS TRANSMISSION & DISTRIBUTION  
4924-01 GAS-NATURAL  
4925-01 GAS COMPANIES  
4925-02 GAS PROCESSORS  
4925-03 GAS PRODUCERS  
4925-04 GAS RECYCLING PLANTS  
4931-98 ELECTRIC & OTHER SERVICES-COMBINED  
4932-01 GAS SYSTEMS  
4932-98 GAS & OTHER SERVICES-COMBINED  
4939-02 UTILITIES  
4939-04 UTILITY MANAGEMENT  
4941-02 WATER & SEWAGE COMPANIES-UTILITY  
4941-05 WATER TREATMENT MANAGEMENT PLANT  
4952-03 SEWER COMPANIES-UTILITY  
5171-98 PETROLEUM BULK STATIONS & TERMINALS  
5172-01 PETROLEUM PRODUCTS (WHOLESALE)  
6729-01 OIL-CRUDE

**Bureau of Labor Statistics Demographic Information  
Based on 1996 Current Population Survey**

	<u>Total Universe</u>			<u>Construction</u>		<u>Index</u>
	<u>(000)</u>	<u>%</u>		<u>(000)</u>	<u>%</u>	
Total	126,708	100.0%		20,518	100.0%	100
Men	68,207	53.8%		13,950	68.0%	126
Women	58,501	46.2%		6,568	32.0%	69
White	107,808	85.1%		17,389	84.7%	100
Black	13,542	10.7%		2,145	10.5%	98
Hispanic	11,642	9.2%		2,069	10.1%	110
18+	126,708	100.0%		20,518	100.0%	100
16-19	6,500	5.1%		397	1.9%	38
20-24	12,138	9.6%		1,628	7.9%	83
25-34	32,077	25.3%		6,427	31.3%	124
35-44	35,051	27.7%		6,283	30.6%	111
45-54	25,514	20.1%		4,417	21.5%	107
55-64	11,739	9.3%		2,056	10.0%	108
65+	3,690	2.9%		333	1.6%	56